

# OFFICE FURNISHINGS

# New vs. rebuilt

By Allen Weber

## New or rebuilt ... is there really a difference?

According to Webster's Dictionary, yes, there is.

**New** (nōō, nyōō) adj. Never used or worn before.

**Rebuild** (rē-`bild) v. **-built** (-`bilt) To make extensive repairs to: reconstruct; to restore to a previous state.

And Underwriters Laboratories Inc. agrees.

New office furnishing systems, UL Listed under "Office Furnishings (QAWZ)," are evaluated for compliance with UL 1286, Standard for Safety for Office Furnishings. These requirements address electrical, mechanical, flammability (ASTM E84 or ANSI/UL 723) and structural characteristics of the furnishings and are consistent with the requirements outlined in Chapter 8 of the International Building Code® (IBC) and Article 605 of the National Electrical Code® (NEC).

Chapter 8 of the 2003 IBC requires office furnishings (also known as "interior wall") to have specific surface-burning characteristics. Additionally, Article 605 of the 2002 NEC outlines specific electrical requirements of office furnishings that apply to office furnishings whether they are new or refurbished.

The UL Mark on the product is the manufacturer's declaration that, at the time and place of original manufacture, the product met all the current applicable safety standard requirements.

## What does UL mean by rebuilt?

Rebuilt office furnishings and office furnishing accessories are factory reconstructed using new or reconditioned component parts. Rebuilt office furnishings and office furnishing accessories are subject to the same requirements as new office furnishings and office furnishing accessories. Rebuilding, as it applies to office furnishings, may include one or more of the following:

- Replace fabric
- Replace damaged plastic trims with new extruded plastic trim parts
- Re-paint steel parts
- Replace damaged core material with new material

## Can the rebuilding process affect the original UL Mark?

Rebuilt office systems are often resold with the original UL Mark in place. When this happens, there is no way for the authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) to determine the effect of the modification(s) of the furnishing with respect to UL 1286, including any possible changes to the safety requirements that may have occurred since the product was originally manufactured.

Consequently, without additional evaluation by UL, there is no way to know if the remanufactured office furnishing still complies with UL 1286, and its original Listing.

The Listing of rebuilt office furnishings certifies that the rebuilt furnishing complies with all of the safety requirements in effect at the time of remanufacture. The Listing also requires that the installation instructions be shipped with the product. This complies with Article 110.3(B) of the NEC, which requires "equipment be installed and used in accordance with any instructions included in the listing or labeling."

UL Listed rebuilt office furnishing will have the original Listing Mark removed and a new Mark applied at the time of remanufacture including the words "Rebuilt Office Furnishing."

For more information regarding rebuilt office furnishings, contact Allen Weber in Northbrook, Ill., by phone at +1-847-664-2013; by fax at +1-847-313-2013; or by e-mail at [Allen.G.Weber@us.ul.com](mailto:Allen.G.Weber@us.ul.com).

